

Our Vision for the Future of Christ the King

This pastoral planning work is not simply about consolidation or survival. It is **rooted in a shared vision for the future of Christ the King**: that our parish would be a thriving center for sacramental life, family formation, and mission. Guided by the phrase *In Illo uno unum*—In Him who is One, we are One—we are discerning how to steward our resources so that every part of our remaining campus supports deeper encounters with Christ, stronger community, and a vibrant parish life for generations to come.

Pastoral Planning FAQ's Regarding the Discernment to Close One Campus

What decision has already been made?

The decision **has been made to recommend to the Archbishop of Boston that our parish needs to close one of its campuses and move forward as one unified campus**. This conclusion comes after significant work in the form of prayer, study, consultation, and a careful review of our parish's pastoral, financial, structural needs and realities. We want to ensure Christ the King can grow not merely as a parish that sustains itself, but as one that **thrives and grows as a center for sacramental life, formation, and community**. Our Spiritual Home!

Why is this decision necessary now?

This decision reflects both **current realities and future hopes**. Maintaining multiple campuses has increasingly stretched our resources—pastorally, financially, and structurally—making it harder to invest fully in the ministries that form disciples and support families.

By focusing our resources on one campus, we can more intentionally shape a space where **every square foot serves the mission of the Church**: worship, formation, hospitality, and outreach - ensuring that our parish remains vibrant, welcoming, and pastorally strong for generations to come.

What are the key financial drivers that are contributing to this decision?

The financial struggles can be summarized with three key financial factors:

- **\$1.2M - \$1.8M capital expense** minimum spend for next three years
- **\$424,000 savings draw** for FY'24 & '25 losses
- **\$595,000 cumulative projected losses** for FY'26, '27 & '28

These factors, combined with the fact that church attendance is down significantly over pre-covid attendance (less than 50%), has resulted in the cost of the parish being carried by significantly less through the offertory.

How is the decision to recommend the closure of a campus being made?

The committee spent significant time discerning how we can best support the long-term vision for Christ the King Parish as a **vibrant, accessible, and welcoming parish**. Guiding principles include:

- Financial and structural sustainability
- Condition, accessibility, and ongoing costs of facilities
- Ability to support sacramental life and faith formation
- Ability to best support the New Vision for Christ the King Parish
- Space for children, youth, families, and community gathering
- Stewardship of parish resources for future generations
- Support for the pastor's needs to effectively carry out his mission and vision.

This process is being carried out **prayerfully and thoughtfully**, recognizing the deep love many have for both campuses and acknowledging that the outcome will be difficult to initially accept, but key to the ongoing success and vitality of our parish.

Is the parish closing?

No. **Christ the King Parish remains one parish, united in faith and mission.**

This discernment is about how best to support parish life going forward, ensuring that our worship, ministries, and community life can flourish together in one place.

What are the next steps in the approval process?

Any final plan must be **submitted to and approved by the Archbishop**.

The role of this committee is to complete the discernment process and put forward a recommendation for his consideration. Fr. Bobby and several members of the committee will be meeting with Archbishop Henning and his advisors at the end of March. We hope to get back to parishioners with updates in April.

What is guiding this process spiritually?

This work has been rooted in prayer, **trust in the Holy Spirit**, and a commitment to the mission of the Church. While difficult, this moment also invites us to renew our focus on what it means to be **one parish, united in faith, hope, and love**.

What will parish life look like after a campus closes?

Our hope is that parish life will become **more connected**. A unified campus allows us to strengthen:

- Liturgical life centered on the Mass and the Sacraments
- Family faith formation and intergenerational connection
- Opportunities for children and youth to belong and grow
- Hospitality that fosters community and welcoming
- A simpler cost structure that will help ensure financial sustainability and support vitality.

Rather than dividing energy across multiple locations, we can invest in a parish home that supports faith at every stage of life.

What about families, children, and youth?

Families are central to the future of Christ the King. One goal of this planning is to ensure space that truly supports:

- Family faith formation and shared hospitality
- Age-appropriate formation for children
- Belonging and community for middle school and high school youth
- By being intentional about how space is used, we hope to create an environment where families feel supported and young people know they have a place in the life of the parish.

How are accessibility and inclusion being considered?

To be truly “one,” our parish campus must be accessible to all—regardless of age, mobility, or ability. Accessibility is not an optional feature but a **core expression of unity and welcome**, and it will be a factor in this discernment.

What happens to parishioners who attend the campus that closes?

Every parishioner is and will remain **fully part of Christ the King**. This transition will require care, patience, and accompaniment. The goal is not simply relocation, but **belonging**—helping all parishioners feel at home in the unified parish community.

What about staff and ministries?

We do not anticipate any staff changes due to the closure. As we continue to grow to meet our parish vision, adjustments to ministry may be a future reality. Impacts will be handled with care, transparency, and respect. While changes are inevitable, the goal is to maintain strong pastoral support and continuity of ministry wherever possible.

What will happen to the campus that closes?

No immediate decisions are being made. The steps taken will follow Archdiocesan guidance and further discernment. At this stage, the committee’s focus is on shaping a parish future that supports life, faith, and mission. At the right time, we will discuss what items from the closed campus can be brought over to the remaining campus to further strengthen unity and relationships.

Did the committee consider trying to hold onto both campuses with the possibility of leasing or repurposing all or part of one campus?

Yes, it was explored at length. The feedback from the Archdiocese is that the parish should focus on the vision and related evangelization. A significant business initiative could pose a

distraction. In addition, the funds from the sale will provide needed funds for investment to advance the vision and to provide financial security for our future.

Why does this feel so painful?

Because it is. Churches are not just buildings—they hold baptisms, funerals, weddings, and countless moments of grace and community. Grief, anger, sadness, a real sense of loss and uncertainty are all natural responses. This decision is not about letting go of the past, but about ensuring that Christ the King can continue to be a place where people encounter Christ, grow in faith, and build community—today and in the years ahead.

How can parishioners share concerns or ask questions?

Fr. Bobby and the pastoral planning committee remain committed to **listening with respect and compassion**. Please send any thoughts, questions, or concerns to PPC@ChristTheKingReading.org.

Where can I learn more about this process?

Find more information from the Pastoral Planning Committee's work on our Christ the King Parish Website: ChristTheKingReading.org/PPC, or scan the QR code below:

